

Citizen Engagement Task Force Meeting 11
March 17, 2017; 9AM-11AM

Task Force Members Present: Damon Circosta, Brad Johnson, Carole Meyre, Tom Oxholm, George Chapman, Joyce Fitzpatrick, Amy Fulk

Task Force Members Absent: Valerie Jordan, Courtney Crowder

Guests: 6

City Staff: 3

Chair Damon begins the meeting at 9:10AM with an anecdote reflecting on the recent fire. He talks about how people don't notice what the city really does until an emergency. He thanks the city for all that they do.

New Community Engagement Structure

- Damon comments how they have worked on levels 1-4 and cleaned up the document.
- Damon wants to work on Level 5 (Broad Public Engagement)
 - Tom adds they shouldn't create a comprehensive list; the CEB should create that. He asks Brad to chime in with thoughts on the communication plans.
 - Brad responds it is on the CEB to define those "legos". He wants to add the values to guide the CEB in the preamble.
 - George agrees, they should add the values to the preamble of the entire document.
 - Brad clarifies he wants the values listed again in the beginning of level 5.
 - Damon talks about the theme of "opting in" and wanting that to continue more. He talks about how citizens want to know what is happening when they provide feedback and want responses (feedback loop). Communication should be more predictable and consistent throughout all city departments.
 - Carole agrees that Level 5 needs to show it is a two-way conversation, not just level 4 telling things to level 5.
 - Larry Jarvis interjects with an example. Someone received a CAC newsletter via my Raleigh Subscriptions and replied to the email. They tried responding to that email, and got a frustrating autoreply saying the email address is not monitored.
 - Damon envisions the CEB handling similar cases like Larry's example. Maybe they have subcommittees including an "electronic communications committee".
- Damon creates a Google doc with this draft 4 Community Engagement structure, including the new document preamble George and Joyce made. All with their laptops can follow the changes.
- Brad wants the document preamble to emphasize the board more. By creating the board, they are adopting certain maxims of size and suitability in the organizing bodies (CECs).
- Damon wants to go back to talking about level 5.
 - Brad responds the CEB really needs to develop Level 5 more.
- Tom wants more narrative added to the preamble about who the task force was.
 - Carole wants to include the number of people who have been to a CAC meeting.
 - Tom replies that he is the only one who has never been to a CAC meeting.
 - Damon adds they have had 11 meetings, and Carole adds in the subgroup meetings.
 - George wants to reference the meeting minutes they have online.
 - Damon responds to George that he wants to give everything to City Council (best practices from other cities, minutes, Google Drive docs., etc.).
 - Joyce adds in they should provide feedback on the facilitator.

- Damon wants to go back to discussing Level 5 and see if anything needs to change.
 - Carole points out the verbiage in one sentence that references “issues” should be changed to “city and community topics”.
- The group has a conversation about “legos” referenced in the document and how they should be explained. Damon added in a sentence explaining what “legos” are.
- Brad wants to add that they were upset that comprehensive data wasn’t readily available.
 - Larry asked Brad what data they were not happy with.
 - Brad responded that all information they got was very piecemeal.
 - Nikki suggests they include getting more comprehensive data readily available as a recommendation.
 - Joyce suggests that recommendation is made outside of this document, like the facilitator feedback.
 - Tom adds that there was not a central depository of information. The city doesn’t have a cohesive citizen engagement structure so it was hard to get a comprehensive picture.
 - Brad adds that other organizations/cities they looked at had this struggle as well. If Raleigh wants to be cutting edge, they should have the numbers easily available.
- Damon drives the task force back to the preamble and asks George to talk about it.
 - George wanted to provide a framework for people looking at the document for the first time. He likes the idea of adding in a brief task force biography. In the preamble, he included some CAC history and the notion that they wanted to preserve and enhance CACs. This was to address people concerned they were eliminating CACs. He wants to add they were specifically asked by council to talk about zoning and fix that issue, which they did. However, their primary focus is citizen engagement.
 - George talked about their research on other city’s engagement structures, and cherry picking to build the optimal system. It is not necessarily the final answer, but they hope to launch a new process equipped to design that. He wants the city council to be the focal point for citizen engagement. He adds they were trying to be responsive to the council and are available to continue being responsive to the council more as needed.
 - Damon adds that Joyce included a sentence about the city lacking alignment throughout the different departments on this.
 - Brad adds that based on their research, this is a common problem for cities.
 - Damon wants to craft the biography on the task force on the Google doc.
 - Collectively, they have been in Raleigh for over 200 years; the range is 12-43 years among task force members.
 - The age range is 32-76 years old.
 - They have lived and worked in most parts of the city; all city council districts were represented.
 - All have been engaged in various city functions (elected officials, CAC officers/participants, city officials, communications experts).
 - They met 11 times with about 50 hours of meeting/subcommittee meetings.
 - Tom adds they had presentations from a CAC Chair, planning commission, the land use attorney, city staff, and a development attorney.
 - They looked at about 20 different cities for engagement structures.
 - Larry adds that they got a document from the school of government’s previous study.
 - Carole wants to add the significant number of public attendance they had at meetings and that the notecards from all meetings should be added. She only sees them from one meeting on the Google drive.

- Tom wonders how many notecards they received total. He jokes that they must have been thought of as the black hole by people who suggested/asked things on the notecards.
 - Carole comments they should have read the notecards during meetings.
- Damon asks Nikki if it is possible to project the document so everyone in the room can see it. Nikki and Brad work to do this.
 - Brad wants to include a sentence that boards and commissions are a source of citizen engagement.
 - Carole adds that they were asked to create a broad community engagement model- not that they just decided to do so.
 - George believes they organically decided to in their first meeting.
 - Carole clarifies they didn't even have the letter from the Mayor then.
 - Larry responds they should have gotten the letter before the first meeting; they got that via email when they were first contacted.
 - After looking back at old notes with references to the "Blue Sky" approach and high expectations, they decide to use "the task force agreed that they would come up with a broad model for citizen engagement".
 - Carole adds they didn't find a city that does things really well. The document positions it like they found "best practices" out there- she doesn't think they really found that.
 - George clarifies it was meant to be a more generic phrase. The group found good nuggets from other cities, but no city is perfect.
- Brad gets the Google document projected on the large TV for everyone to see and work off of.
 - George talks about the number of peer communities they looked at. They decide on using "over 40".
 - Brad notes Raleigh is investing more into this than other cities.
 - Larry clarifies Raleigh is doing more than most cities that the task force looked at.
- Brad wants to emphasize that this document is a strong recommendation.
 - Joyce clarifies they want to sell the whole package.
 - Damon agrees the whole thing is a strong recommendation, but the details could be changed and improved by the permanent CEB as opposed to a temporary task force.
 - Brad wants to clarify that everything in the document is not final. He wants details to be hashed out more (continually improving), but the task force's work is a valid framework.
 - Larry asks if this is a summary of their work. He says there is no reference to rezoning.
 - They show Larry where they do acknowledge rezoning in the document, and add that that is a separate recommendation. Council could opt to accept either, both or neither recommendation (zoning, and the new structure).
 - Brad concludes they could strengthen their sentence about rezoning.
- Damon states that Courtney and Val agreed with this document before today's edits. He doesn't believe anything changed significantly, but he is happy to follow a process to get their approval again. He feels ready to give the document to council as an agreed consensus document.
 - Tom and Joyce want one night to review it. Those without laptops can't see all the changes.
 - Brad outlines the slight changes he has made to the document during the meeting. None changed the substance of the document.

- George adds that Brad just repeated parts of the preamble before each level, showing how it applies to the level.
- Damon emphasizes he wants this document to be their recommendation. If anyone does not agree with this document, they should speak up.
 - Carole states she does not support the document.
 - Tom replies to Carole that they wouldn't expect her to.
 - Joyce wants any substantive changes to be brought up to the whole committee.
 - George agrees and says anyone who sees a flag should be able to add another meeting.
 - Brad wants Level 3 to be clarified so it doesn't read as a replacement to the CACs. He wants the evolution to be more drawn out. Some CACs might organically merge.
 - George agrees to add a sentence on how the system of CECs should be an evolution of the current system of CACs.
 - The group agrees that it is clear, but Carole responds that it is absolutely not clear. Perhaps she sees it through a different filter.
 - In response, the group adds a clarification sentence.
 - Carole talks about how the CECs are different from CACs so she doesn't know how one can evolve into the other. She doesn't see the element of advocacy.
 - Brad responds that they will evolve, they are just removing rezoning.
 - Carole says once the CAC takes a side on something, they advocate.
 - Brad believes the "citizen-lead" element should encompass this.
 - Tom comments that if the evolution bothers Carole, you could look at it as a second generation of the CACs. The purpose is not advocacy but engagement involving a two way conversation.
 - Carole says the point of CACs is information and education. Advocacy is not necessarily political.
 - Damon summarizes that CACs are being pushed into the role of advocates, as well as almost being a courtroom to engage with citizens. The CINs should be the advocates.
 - Carole wants this clearly stated in the document.
 - Brad adds that meetings shouldn't turn into an advocacy push.
 - Carole is confused because Joyce referred to it as a "mingle".
 - Joyce clarifies this was an example, the CEC makes the meeting.
 - Brad, again, chimes in that "citizen-lead" implies that.
- Damon steps back and states that Carole will not agree with the document ever, so they should try to finish the document so everyone else agrees.
 - Carole is fine with this, but believes other people reading it will have her same questions. Every one of the top bullets describes CACs, she states.
 - Damon replies by asking her why she won't support it, then.
 - Carole disagrees with the voting policy.
 - Tom believes they should move on since Carole will never agree.
 - Brad wants to add that Carole believes the core principals apply to the current CAC.
 - Carole believes it is too unclear in the current CEC section.
 - The group decides to move on.
- Tom makes the motion to accept the document with any edits that don't change the substance.
 - All present vote to accept (Damon Circosta, Brad Johnson, Tom Oxholm, George Chapman, Joyce Fitzpatrick, Amy Fulk) the document except Carole.
 - Carole comments this model lessens the degree of engagement at a lower level.

- Damon says he will allow Valerie and Courtney to vote via email.
 - Tom asks that minutes reflect who voted for this document to move forward.
- Damon asks how they would like to present the information to council.
 - Tom suggests Damon presents it and if anyone wanted to come along and advocate for their opinion, they were welcome to do so.
 - Amy asks if there is something specific they need to do.
 - Larry responds they should ask council how they want the information.
 - George says they should give council the report and offer a presentation as well.
 - Everyone thanks the rest of the group for their work. Damon concludes that everyone has the city's best interest in mind throughout this process.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40AM. Damon and Joyce agreed to clean up the document together.